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"ACCORDING TO THE AGADA IT IS SAID THAT
IF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL HAD WAITED
ANOTHER MINUTE BEFORE LEAVING EGYPT, THEY
WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN SAVED. THIS IS HOW I
UNDERSTAND IT: THERE WAS A MOMENT OF
SUPREME DARING, A MOMENT OF SUDDEN CRISIS,
WHEN ONE RUSHES TO SAVE WHAT HE CAN, SEIZING
AND CARRYING A HEAVY LOAD, A LOAD THAT
IS BEYOND HIS ORDINARY STRENGTH, WITHOUT
FEELING ITS WEIGHT. MOMENTS SUCH AS THESE
DO NOT RECUR. AND IT IS OUR DUTY TO PREPARE
FOR THIS MOMENT: A MOMENT OF SUPREME DARING."

A. D. GORDON

"THE SECOND ALIYA ACCOMPLISHED THIS TASK....
ITS WORKERS LIVED A MOMENT OF SUPREME
DARING IN THE HISTORY OF OUR PEOPLE."

D. KALAI



T H E S E C O N D A L I Y A

The theme of our summer program in the cities and in the machanot kayitz will be the Second Aliya. On the occasion of its 50th anniversary, which is being marked this year, our chaverim will study and review the history and the achievements of the Second Aliya.

This study is based on two premises. The first is that the story of the Second Aliya is interesting and well worth telling.

Beyond this, it is intended that this matter be studied not only for the interest of the story, but also for the sake of what it can teach us. There can be no question that the foundation of the development of the present-day achievements in Eretz Yisrael was prepared during this period, 1904-1914. Therefore, we will attempt to see events not merely as isolated incidents in the chronological order in which they occurred, but to discover the spirit of life which pulsated in them, the unifying thread linking the individual deeds within a larger framework of collective reasoning and the collective will.

Such familiarity with the past in its perspective is the way to an understanding and appreciation of the present. Based on this understanding, we may hope to derive a realistic program for the future. It is in this context that we undertake a study of the Second Aliya.

There are two migratory movements with which we can compare the Second Aliya. One is the concurrent immigration to America; the other is the previous Aliya to Eretz Yisrael. The immigration to Eretz Yisrael in 1904 was a trickle compared with the gigantic flood of Jewish immigrants who streamed from the countries of Eastern Europe to the Americas at that time. While it compared favorably in size with the First Aliya, it was less conspicuous, less organized, unsolicited.

Without attempting to go into an extensive discussion of the background of the immigrants, let us examine a few general characteristics. The Second Aliya was a movement of individuals. No one called; no one organized meetings; no one made any promises. This spontaneity, this individual action was an important feature of the new movement, and had consequences of great value. "One man came from a town, one or two from a district. Individually and singly, they came in their own way and in their own responsibility. One immigrant hardly knew the next. The driving motive was, I think, not the slogan of redemption of the people and the return to the land, it was not the idea of saving someone else; it was mainly the aim of self-redemption. Before you go out to save others, save yourself first. This spontaneity and personal responsibility which was then an asset of the very few was to become the foundation stone of the entire structure."

The immigrants were drawn from two sources. On one hand, there were members of the "Homel Group"--men and women who had organized the Jewish self-defense movement in Russia as a protection against the government-sanctioned pogroms. On the other hand, there was a group of religious students steeped in both ancient and modern Hebrew culture but disturbed by spiritual unrest. In coming to Eretz Yisrael, they sought a solution to their personal problems as well as to the problems of the nation through their own action.

The difficulties which confronted the young immigrant of 1904 were formidable. He faced first the problems of physical environment; the difficulty of acclimatization; disease, malaria in particular; barren land, a collection of incongruous deserts and swamps.

In addition to these struggles with the new physical environment, the young immigrants were forced to wage constant battle against the social surroundings which they found. To begin with, the Turkish government opposed immigration. Once they entered Eretz Yisrael, they faced the problem of earning a living in the face of competition from Arab neo-slave labor. They encountered vigorous opposition from the already established colonies of Jewish land owners who rejected their demands for work, who rejected their requests for increased pay, who were annoyed

by their expectation to be treated as self-respecting human beings.

The most basic struggle of all was the struggle with himself, which each of these early pioneers had to conduct. The struggle with a body not used to physical work, the struggle of hands trained in the use of the pen learning the idiom of the hoe.

To face these problems, the young chalutzim brought neither experience, nor money, nor a predetermined blueprint for future action. They brought only their idealism, their willingness to work, and their determination to make a new way of life for themselves and for those to follow them.

"What are our powers and our resources: at the moment, we can only say zero. Among the inhabitants of the country are a few individuals--there are a few individuals among the young people who are coming to the country now--that is all! If only this tiny group would unite and set to work."

The pioneers came to the land without a clear understanding of its needs or of how it could be rebuilt. Under the impact of reality, they soon clarified their ideas as to what the task required and they began to evolve the concepts and institutions which became the tools of the effort. As each such an answer to the needs of the revival became clear to them, they made it one of their aims and initiated the struggle to secure its realization. Thus gradually the formidable unchartered job of rebuilding the homeland was reduced to terms of certain practical objectives for which they could strive in their daily living and working.

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conquest
of Labor

PROBLEMS AND TASKS OF THE SECOND ALIYA

Before beginning the narration of events of the Second Aliya, let us examine the basic problems around which the struggle was ultimately centered. There are five such:

1. Kibbush Avoda, the conquest of labor.
2. Land reclamation and colonization.
3. Cooperation, planning and organization.
4. Defense.
5. Cultural renaissance in Hebrew.

The first was the struggle for Kibbush Avoda--literally the conquest of labor. Our understanding of this term is somewhat different from the intent of those who first coined the phrase. The changes result from adjustment to the realities of building a Jewish homeland. The fundamental spirit remains intact.

According to the philosophy of the Second Aliya, "work" had to be "conquered" for two reasons: the first national, the second personal. The chalutzim recognized the fact that a Jewish homeland could be built only by Jewish labor because:

1. Arab labor would not exert itself to drain swamps or to create potential for absorbing new immigrants.
2. The land fundamentally belonged to him that tilled it and not to the holder of the deed.
3. A vigorous people with the characteristics which these pioneers sought to develop could only grow if it were deeply rooted to the soil and deeply attached to work.

For the individual, the immigrants felt that personal salvation was to be found in work and in a return to nature. Labor became not only the sole means of rebuilding the nation, it became an ideal, an agent for purifying the soul. They created a "Dat Ha-avoda", a "religion of labor".

"We are trying to create life, a life of our own animated by our own spirit to ways that are our ways. All that we wish in Eretz Yisrael is to work with our own hands at all things which make up life, to labor with our own hands at all kinds of jobs, at all kinds of crafts and trades, from the most skilled, the cleanest and the easiest, to the coarsest, the most despised, the

most difficult.....To me the thing is clear and simple. Our ideal must be labor.....work will heal us.....only if we set up work itself as the ideal, or rather if we bring into the open the ideal of labor shall we be cured of the disease which attacked us. We shall then sew together the rents by which we were torn from nature."

However, in Eretz Yisrael in 1904, there was no work for young Jewish laborers. There was no work because the topography of the land made life unbearable in many places; because the low Arab wage rates undersold Jewish labor, because the Jewish colonists refused to hire Jews as workers. The national and personal rebirth was at a standstill until the young pioneers determined to "conquer labor". At the time, this meant to capture the existing opportunities to work and to conquer one's own weakness, inexperience, and inhibitions concerning physical work. Since then, it has acquired the additional meaning of the creation of new opportunities of work by more chalutzim.

".....they made a sacred decision; to discipline themselves for work. They armed themselves with a love that knew no limits and a patience that was endless; they fortified themselves against mockery and the despair that eats into the soul; they prepared themselves to fight against nature: first, the nature of the Jew of the Diaspora, estranged from the soil, and also to fight against physical hunger, and against their enemiesbecause they knew that they had to build a new era in the Yishuv (community)--the era of the Conquest of Labor, the major achievement of the period of the Second Aliya."

The second problem of the Aliya was that of land and directly related to this the problem of colonization. Partially the difficulties were topographic: "The land was a waste of sand and stones over large districts, and there were many swamps." Additional difficulties arose from the fact that the immigrants were penniless youths who did not have the means with which to buy land. Herein are the two phases of the problem: How to reclaim the develop the land; how to enable the penniless workers to obtain land and the means to colonize it.

The third problem was that of planning and organization. It was obvious to the chalutzim from the first that individual enterprise would not fill the needs of the pioneering ideal, neither from their personal point of view nor from the point of view of national creativity. It followed then that they would have to find ways of initiating and executing the work of national rebuilding which would at the same time satisfy their personal ideals of self-realization, self-labor, equality, social justice.

The last two problems, self-defense and cultural renaissance involving the rebirth of Hebrew as a living tongue, will not be dealt with in this section.

These then were the five tasks: a) the conquest of labor, b) the reclamation and colonization of land, c) the creation of methods of cooperation, planning, and organization, d) defense, and 3) the renaissance of Hebrew culture.

THE STRUGGLE FOR KIBBUSH AVODA

The young immigrant of 1904 found a demoralized, degenerate community awaiting him in Eretz Yisrael. It was fortunate for the future that certain factors closed to the new immigrants all roads leading to assimilation with the rest of the community and compelled them to become an independent element.

The old community was demoralized because of its reliance on the grants of philanthropists, especially Baron Rothschild. These colonists had drafted far from the soil and used Arab labor almost exclusively to work their holdings. The gentlemen farmers sent their sons to France to study, and Hebrew culture was being replaced by French and Levantine customs and manners. Thus consistent with its complete lack of moral fiber or vision, the majority of the old community agreed to the abandonment of Eretz Yisrael for a colonization project in Uganda such as was proposed at that time.

"...the colonists...did not regard labor in esteem. They regarded it as a burden and sought every means of avoiding it...The ordinary colonist considered himself as the mind organizing and regulating the work of the plantation in the style of the French colonist at Algiers. Thus indeed were they referred to: the village was called a colony and the farmer was called a colonist...That daily manual labor was the basis of agriculture and the source of its blessing was an idea very far removed from his mind.

The immigrants of 1904 were not the first to point out the absurdity and the danger of this way of thinking and this manner of living--absurd from the point of view of the national home which they intended to establish, and dangerous from the point of view of the very existence of the individual settler. This time, the evil was not only stressed and defined, but it was attacked by men who came to destroy it with their own hands."

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Conquest

Labor

Most of the young immigrants sought employment in the colonies of Judaea, especially Petach Tikva. They were met, for the most part, with ridicule, contempt, and opposition. In many cases, they were forced to undergo the humiliating experience of the daily "shape up" in order to secure employment:

"In the empty square beside the workers' hotel, hundreds of Arabs gathered; they had been waiting since dawn. These are the seasonal workers...And we, numbering no more than a few tens...have to wait for work in the market place each morning.

"And now, the supervisor comes out, riding on a mule, very smug and satisfied with himself, a whip in his hand, speaking coarsely, dressed in white--is this a farmer? His sharp glance cuts across your face and leaves you feeling as though he had struck you, and you stand rooted in your place, watching with pain and anger as all the Arab workers stream after him to work. After that, you lie down on the bed of boards in the filthy hotel, gnashing your teeth in depression and rage and waiting for the next day, for the same pitiful waiting in the market place.

"As for the farmers, not only did they not wish to accept the Jew as a worker, but even those who did accept him, deliberately made the work difficult for him and added to the strain he had to undergo in his transition to a life of physical labor. Only in very rare cases was there a supervisor or a veteran worker who took it upon himself to teach the newcomer how to handle his work. In most cases, the new worker was put to a severe test: he would be placed in a row of experienced Arab workers and he would be forced to compete with them and to keep up with them, and to equal them in his output. The Arabs would exploit his inexperience and would make fun of him. They would work all the faster in order to wear him down. Thus, the newcomer would feel abandoned and alone among strangers who mocked him in a foreign language and with loud voices.

"If they were able to bear all these sufferings, it was only owing to the power of their ideal, which demanded of them that they learn how to work and to become familiar with the soil of Eretz Yisrael.

"The young men and women who came to work in a Jewish colony had usually just left their families. In most cases, too, they had defied the wishes of their families. Most of them were extremely young and now they were faced with a life of almost unbearable loneliness. This loneliness was crushing. There was a great need to create a new family for these young wanderers. A family

of comrades which would look after the elementary physical and spiritual needs of the workers. In the course of meeting the difficulties and adjusting to them, the first institutions were created which served as models for later developments."

In September, 1905, at a meeting of workers in Yechezkiel Chenkin's hut, a group of forty workers discussed a program for organization. There were at the time, less than a thousand Jewish workers in the country. They agreed on the following principles: The conquest of labor, the founding of a workers' kitchen, and the support of newcomers and the sick. Unfortunately, there were points of disagreement, too, and the meeting disbanded without the formation of a party.

Within the following year, two parties were formed: Hapoel Hatzair (The Young Worker) and Poale Zion (The Worker of Zion). The first was a creation of Eretz Yisrael. Its followers were on the whole steeped in Jewish background, not inclined to socialist dogma, though, devoted to the ideal of labor. The Poale Zion, on the other hand, had its roots in the Galut (Diaspora). Its members were largely products of the Russian Poale Zion, participants in the self-defense groups, Yiddish speaking, with a doctrinaire Socialist outlook. In actual practice, these two groups worked side by side to the same ends and with the same devotion.

Hapoel Hatzair opened a communal restaurant for the workers of Petach Tikvah. In the autumn of 1906, there was formed also a so-called hospitality committee whose job it was to secure housing and accommodations for new immigrants. Further yet, a workers' committee was organized to accept work on a contracting basis in order to be able to train new workers. Another committee acted as a labor exchange. Few of the workers had regular jobs so that every evening work had to be found. In order to avoid the necessity of the workers' applying individually to the farmers every day and to prevent any possible favoritism, it was customary for the committee to centralize all the jobs available and to distribute them among the workers. Thus, a system of organized labor was introduced on a small scale.

And so, there came into being the first practical instruments for the realization of the ideal of Kibbush Avoda, the conquest of labor.

By the end of the year, 1905, the little group of workers found themselves greatly strengthened. They were by now trained and many of them excelled in particular trades. The institutions which they had founded proved helpful, and they believed that they saw before them the immediate road to their goal, the rebuilding of Eretz Yisrael.

If the chalutzim had any false sense of security, the events which followed quickly dispelled it. A few almost insignificant incidents precipitated a series of clashes which showed that the adjustment and new strength of the chalutzim had, if anything, increased the resentment against them.

Much to the dismay of many of the colonists, the young workers had begun organizing social and cultural activities into which they had drawn the young people of the colony. A large festival was planned for Chanuka of 1905 and preparations were under way when news came of the bloody pogroms which followed the Russo-Japanese War in Russia. The young chalutzim, most of whom had their families and friends in Russian and Polish towns were very hard hit by this news. Naturally, it was considered that in this atmosphere of anxiety and distress the Maccabean Festival would be postponed.

But a number of members of the local council of Petach Tikvah who had received instructions from some of the extremist religious fanatics in Jerusalem to foster dissension between the workers and the local inhabitants, particularly the young people, decided to exploit the situation. They promptly published an announcement that as the authority responsible for the social life of the colony, the council would not permit the workers to "insult the memory of the holy victims of pogroms by frivolous entertainment".

When this statement was made known, the workers were furious. Who more than they knew such pogroms as these; who more than they felt the bitter resentment. The workers therefore published a counter declaration in which they stated that there would, of course, be no dancing or entertainment, but that all were invited to attend a mass meeting of mourning and protest, the proceeds of which would be devoted to the sufferers of the pogroms, to orphans and widows. They wanted further to express their feelings of admiration for the leaders of the Jewish self-defense in Russia.

The conflict between the council and the workers soon grew to extents entirely out of proportion with the incident. Many grievances flared into the open: the dislike of the colonists for the contact of their respectable sons and daughters with the "barefooted workers"; the lack of orthodox religious observance among many of the workers as evidenced by such scandalous conduct as men and women attending parties together; the old resentment of Jewish workers with their demands for better treatment and higher wages.

Soon the factors of obstinacy, prestige, and discipline added strength to the dispute. The council took the stand that since the order had been given, right or wrong, it must be obeyed. Only then would the council be prepared to meet with representatives of the workers and to discuss

other matters with them such as wages, housing and religion. The demonstration of the workers took place in spite of all pressure, and the council looked upon it as an act of open rebellion. They called a meeting at once and decided to send the armed guards of the colony to disperse the gathering by force. The Bedouins who were the colony's watchmen came with loaded guns on their shoulders. They got as far as the threshold where, looking in and seeing many of the children of their masters among the crowd, they turned and left.

That evening marked the beginning of the conflict known as the "Petach Tikva boycott". Reprisals were soon taken against the owner of the hall where the meeting was held and against the workers.

A further incident occurred when a new immigrant was found openly smoking a cigarette in the colony on Sabbath. This incident was inflated into a public scandal and the local council called upon the farmer who employed the erring worker to dismiss him. Furthermore, they commanded his landlord to put him out of the room where he lived.

The landlord refused to obey the order, and the worker was immediately employed by the newly organized workers' contracting committee which had a contract for a large project at that time. The Local Council could not tolerate this. They passed a number of resolutions stating requirements for workers' residents in Petach Tikva:

1. "The workers must conduct themselves in accordance with the Jewish religion.
2. They must obey the orders of the Local Councils.
3. They should not invite the local inhabitants of the colony to attend the workers' meetings and entertainment.
4. Any worker signing and undertaking to abide by these rules will be permitted to live in the colony and obtain employment; any worker who refused to sign such an agreement would be prohibited from renting a room in Petach Tikva and working in the colony."

The workers, of course, rejected these demands, but a committee of five members was elected to negotiate with the village council. The sessions held between this committee and the Petach Tikva council were long and animated, but no agreement was reached, and after a few days, the council commenced to carry out its measure of retaliation. Secret orders were sent to all farmers

employing Jewish workers, calling upon them to dismiss the workers and to deprive them of their room. Not all the farmers complied with these orders. However, because of constant pressure on the land owners the number of discharged workers was increased from week to week.

Meantime, shiploads of new workers continued to arrive in the wake of the pogroms, making the already critical employment and housing situation even more desperate. In this moment of desperation, the workers' committee published a pamphlet addressed to all workers in the other settlements and cities of Judea, calling on them to help their boycotted comrades in Petach Tikva. Representatives were sent out to explain the nature of the dispute and to raise funds. The response of the workers was the first act of solidarity and mutual help initiated among Jewish workers in Eretz Israel.

It was at this time also that the importance of labor on a contracting basis became evident. Under this system, jobs were contracted out to a workers' committee which then controlled the conduct of the job including hiring, pay and supervision. At this time the workers' committee had a contract to finish. Every dismissed worker, every new immigrant found employment on this project. As long as the job lasted the morale of the workers was very high, and every evening they were to be seen marching down the main street on their way home from work, arm in arm, singing and shouting joyously. It can well be imagined that this sight did not sooth the ire of the Petach Tikva council.

Another attempt to mediate the dispute in February 1906 failed, and the situation deteriorated rapidly: the congestion increased; the rainy season came on; the contract jobs ended only too soon. As spring drew near, hunger increased and unemployment became more widespread. Gradually the workers began to scatter in all directions. The council of the settlements treated those who remained very harshly, particularly the leaders. Life became wearisome and bitter.

It was at this dark time that the opportunity for settlement in Galilee appeared to rekindle the spirit and hope of the sorely pressed pioneers. One of the newcomers, Eliezer Shochat, who had gone to Galilee himself in the early days of Petach Tikva dispute, sent messages to Judea describing the plowing in the fields and the peaceful way of life in which one could prepare for work on the soil. The stories stirred the imagination of the Judean workers. Here was a way of life different from that on the plantations of orange groves and in the vineyards which they had known in Judea.

The workers emerged from the Petach Tikva dispute with honor, but it seemed that the toil of almost two years had been wasted. In terms of material achievements it was true that all was lost, but the workers carried with them the lessons of these early years: they took with them their hardened muscles and calloused hands, they took with them their experiences with mutual aid, their knowledge of self-managed contracting committees, their recollection of workers' kitchen and hospitality committees; they went to their new work as veterans of the country, confident of their ability to adjust and aware of their collective strength in the struggle for their beliefs.

The first battle in Kibbush Avoda had been fought and won.

"New and tantalizing dreams now tempted them away. In their imaginations they saw the hill ranges of the Galilee rising on the horizon, and their hearts whispered to them that over there lay the way out."

THE STRUGGLE FOR LAND AND SETTLEMENT

-- the conquest of the Galilee --

In Succot (early October) 1906, Eliezer Shochat, the pioneer in the Galilee, was called to a general meeting of the Hapoel Hatzair party in Judea. He told them about the region: that there was room in it for hundreds of workers; that only there, in the Galilee, would they find Eretz Israel as they first imagined it would be when they came from the Galut. After this, in autumn 1906, the movement began in earnest.

Directly after the festival of Succot, nine men began the trip from Petach Tikva to the Galilee on foot. Their goal was Mount Tabor where the biblical prophetess, Deborah, had once led the children of Israel to victory over the heathens. On this trip the men became acquainted with the country and with its inhabitants. They saw the poverty and backwardness of the oppressed Arab serfs. They saw the once fruitful Emek Yizrael (Valley of Esdraelon) lying desolate.

As the roofs of the village of Mescha on the slopes of Mount Tabor became visible, the young men burst into song. We are told that they knew only one marching song--Chushu Achim, Chushu (Hurry, Brothers, Hurry) and so they sang it over and over until they entered the streets of the settlement.

The villagers greeted them heartily and gladly. After their experience in Petach Tikva, such a welcome came as a pleasant and encouraging surprise. After a few moments they were told why the inhabitants were so delighted to see them and had received them so warmly. By a fateful chance the travellers had arrived just as the colony was being attacked by a band of Bedouin marauders from a powerful tribe called Zabachi. The outnumbered settlers of Mescha had stood their ground and defended themselves resolutely, but their attackers had penetrated the settlement and were stealing cattle from the barns. Suddenly the defenders saw the Arabs turn and flee. They could not understand the meaning of this action. Only when the nine young workers entered the settlement did the colonists realize that the sound of the singing had frightened the Bedouins. The attackers had sent scouts to determine what sort of people were approaching, and the scouts had returned in haste reporting that a mighty host of Jews was coming to the rescue of Mescha. The bandits fled at once.

Their first night in the shadow of Mount Tabor was a night of festivity. They danced and drank with their future employers until dawn.

Their performance on this occasion was an unwitting sign of the role they were to fulfill in the future of the land: they had come to work and defend.

Thus the workers entered the Galilee as saviors.

"Life in the Galilee was a new experience for the youths from Judea. The workers from the orange groves of Petach Tikva who had become so skillful with the hoe were complete novices in work with a plow and with farm animals. At first the new skills required and the new approach necessary in undertaking field work, made the work difficult.

In the Galilee there were no fixed hours in a working day. The work went on endlessly. Before dawn, the worker would rise to his labor, prepare the seeds, get the tools ready, and go to the fields to begin to plough side by side with his employer. He would eat his breakfast and lunch on the upturned soil near the plow and would return home at sunset. But then his real work only began: to lead the herd to the well and water it, to fetch water for the requirements of the house either by donkey or in barrels on a cart, to feed the draught animals, and so on until the first stars began to appear in the sky."

Little by little the boys learned their jobs. They became familiar with all the branches of agriculture. Their life and work in the Galilee changed them. It changed their clothing and their appearance: they wore knee boots in place of sandals; their hair grew long for want of barbers and they allowed their beards to grow, their shoulders became stooped from long hours of pushing behind the plow. It changed their mental outlook: they developed self-reliance and initiative; within them a new idea kindled that perhaps the Jewish worker had come not merely "to conquer" the existing work, that perhaps he had other missions of settlement as well. In the course of the se reflections they gave birth to the idea of the labor settlement.

The contact of the workers in the Galilee even with Judea, was scant. They were far removed from the inter-party struggles of the Poale Zion and Hapoel Hatzair. They lived in a world of their own making, creating their own ideas and forms. Until the Galilean period, the young immigrant of 1904 was a simple hired laborer, seeking a day's work. In the Galilee he became a man of action. The qualities of love of labor, of faith in it, of ability for it crystalized in the Galilee.

The workers developed the capacity for having all the information about the job at their fingertips. They had knowledge and initiative which enabled them to size up the situation and its difficulties and to find the best way of coping with them. The realization of this knowledge and capacity led the worker to another and greater understanding: that he was worthy and capable of beginning to do something on his own responsibility.

In Sedjera, a farm of Baron Rothchild's Jewish Colonization Association, where most of the workers were concentrated, the supervisor began courses in agriculture. A foundation of science was added to their practical knowledge. It would never have occurred to the workers of Judea to assemble and listen to a lecture on citriculture or vinegrowing at which they worked. But in the Galilee the spirit and outlook of the worker was very different.

In 1907 a non-party association called "Hachoresht" (the plowman) was formed by the Galileans. The original aims did not yet embody their desire for settlement, but the members of Hachoresht were telling one another from the first that the mission of the Jewish worker was not only to "conquer work" but also to redeem the soil.

The fame of the "plowmen" spread through the land. More and more workers from Judea came to the Galilee. The center of gravity of the new Yishuv passed to this region.

In 1908 the promise of the preceding years saw its first fulfillment. The training farm at Sedjera which was owned by the Jewish Colonization Association, financed largely by Baron Rothschild, was turned over to the workers for a period of one year. All of the work was to be done on their own responsibility and to be directed by their own members without outside supervision. The aim of the collective was to prove that even under the primitive conditions which prevailed at that time, the workers were able to organize a cooperative independent life. They sought to reduce the farm's previous deficit and to strengthen the belief of the community in the powers of the Jewish worker.

THE LABOR SETTLEMENT DEVELOPS

Thus we come to the first real action in the field of labor settlement after four years of preparatory and preliminary activities.

This step came only after the formative years in which the character of the undertaking was shaped and in which a new man to be the bearer of the experiment was created. In the lessons of these years of groping, of trial and error, and in the clear sighted determination of the new type of man, lay the source of the vitality and the strength of the labor settlements.

The Sedjera project was a success. The workers inaugurated a system of communal living with one budget, with one income, and with a common kitchen. An important factor in the resolution of the difficulties of the group was the work of Manya Shochet who today is the "grand old lady" of the collective settlements. The group accomplished all the work required of it by the director. It became a model of success which nourished the dream of a cooperative settlement.

Fortunately for the future of the land, the beginnings of the collective movement coincided with the initiation of the settlement activity of the Zionist Organization. Founded in 1897 as the body representative of all Jews throughout the world who supported the ideal of creating a Jewish National Home in Eretz Israel, the Zionist Organization during the early years of its existence restricted itself to political activity aimed at securing a charter of colonization from the Sultan of Turkey. There was, however, an important section of the organization which saw that Jewish

rights in Eretz Israel would not, at that stage, be attained by political methods, and that the only course of action available was to continue the practical work of piece-meal settlement and reclamation. In 1901 the Zionist Organization had established the Jewish National Fund (Keren Kayemet L'Yisroel) for the purpose of buying land in Eretz Israel as the inalienable possession of the Jewish people. In 1905 the J.N.F. made its first tentative land purchase. However, only in 1907 after political efforts had ended in temporary failure, did the Zionist Organization decide to create a Palestine Office to conduct settlement activities on the land purchased by the J.N.F.

The following year, the late Dr. Arthur Ruppin arrived in Eretz Israel to assume control of the Palestine Office. He was a man with outstanding qualifications for his new responsibilities. A sociologist of eminence, he had also been through the hard school of business and knew how to effect a workable synthesis between practical considerations and the need for bold pioneering. This man succeeded in winning the confidence of the the men and women of the Second Aliya.

After investigating conditions in Eretz Israel, he came to the conclusion that the plantation system did not offer a sound basis for successful settlement and decided that on J.N.F. land he would initiate a system of mixed farming. This was the same time at which the Galilean pioneers in "Hachores" were reaching the same conclusion. To succeed in his aim, Ruppin saw that he needed a type of man who would be prepared to break new ground and to engage in agricultural labor in all its branches. He found what he was looking for in the small groups of workers, in the colonists who were just then beginning to weave their dreams of independent collective workers' settlements.

Ruppin began using the chalutzim in the planting of an olive wood at Ben Shemen in Judea and in reclamation work in the swamps at Kinneret near the Sea of Galilee. In 1908, the Zionist Organization founded its first training farm at Kinneret. This was the year in which the workers successfully took over the management of the Sedjera farm of the privately owned subsidized J.C.A.

The work of the J.N.F. and of the Colonization Department were necessarily limited during these early years by lack of finances. The revenue in 1908 was £13,700. Nevertheless, to quote Dr. Alex Bein--"their work was a turning point in the history of Jewish settlement in Eretz Israel inasmuch as the experience gained from the practical

experiments served to pave the way for future activities which were to be developed after 1920 on an increasingly large scale." (History of Agricultural Settlement in Palestine, page 23)

On the eve of Shavuot, 1908, the first eight workers entered the Kinneret farm in spite of the apprehension of some of the comrades who still held that the task of the worker was conquest of existing labor opportunities. Some of the apprehensions arose from distrust of the manager appointed for the farm.

This man, whose name was Berman, did much to humiliate the workers and persisted in employing Arabs for certain types of work. Before long, relations grew so bad that some of the workers were forced to leave. The members of Hachorish met and decided to turn to Dr. Ruppin with a final warning demanding that Berman be dismissed.

Ruppin evolved a compromise whereby Berman was only "half-dismissed." A portion of the land was to be taken from him and given to the management of the workers. The rest was to remain under him as there was no official on hand to take his place.

The tract of land entrusted to the workers was called Um-Juni. It was separated from the rest of Kinneret farm by the Jordan River. The agreement concerning the work at Um-Juni was signed at Kinneret in December, 1909. The signers of the agreement were veterans of the Galilee who had gone through the farming school at Sedjera. They were the founders of the first independent project of colonization carried out by the Jewish worker in Palestine. By this act, the unity of the struggle for the conquest of labor and colonization and reclamation of the land saw its first practical realization.

The original group remained in Um-Juni only temporarily. They soon moved to a second colonization venture at Merchavia in the Emek, but Ruppin felt that the experiment of Um-Juni should be continued.

Another group, numbering only twelve at the outset, was found to replace the ones that had left. They were people who had lived on the Kinneret farm and who had left because of their quarrels with the manager. At this time they were living collectively on the individualistic colony of Hedera in the Valley of Sharon. They worked on private farms but pooled their wages and kept a common household. They called themselves the Commune of Romni since most of

them came from the town of Romni in the Ukraine. This group became the new occupant of Um-Juni.

On the 28th of Tishri (October 23), 1911, the members of the Commune of Romni came to Um-Juni and received "everything" from the departing group. They signed an agreement "to work from that day until the end of the grain harvest that year as workers in the farm at Um-Juni belonging to the Society for the Cultivation of the Yishuv and to obey the orders of its officials."

Ten months after their arrival they announced to Dr. Ruppin that they had decided to call the place Dagania after the blue cornflower which they found in their fields. The group remained on the site after the contract expired. To this day some of them live in the Dagania which they founded, the first real kvutza.

The group which had left Um-Juni went to found a workers' settlement at Merchavia on the first land bought by the J.N.F. in the Emek (Valley of Esdraelon). Merchavia was not like Dagania in its foundation. Merchavia was settled only after an elaborate plan was drawn up for its colonization by the famous German Jewish sociologist and economist, Dr. Franz Oppenheimer.

Merchavia was designed to unite the advantages of communal living with those of the individualist settlement. The workers were to live cooperatively but were to be paid wages on a differential scale in accordance with the skill required. Unlike Dagania, the farm was to have an appointed manager. This last feature was one of the important reasons for the failure of this experiment. Even this failure led to important developments: 1) it saw the opening of the Emek to colonization; 2) it was, in a sense, the forerunner of the Moshav Ovdim, the individual small-holders' cooperative which developed after the First World War.

During this period another important development for the future of the land was the establishment of additional training farms after the models of the Sedjera farm of the J.C.A. and the Kinnoret farm of the Zionist Organization. The Zionist Organization itself established two more farms at Ben Shimon and Hulda. Private farms founded by wealthy Zionists and based on the principle of Jewish labor were founded at Migdal, in the Jordan Valley, and Poriah, in the Galilee.

Through life and work on these farms, groups of workers living on a cooperative basis were organized. The workers

learned to handle all the branches of agriculture and learned how to create a community within the bounds of the farms on which they lived. Each group and each experience helped prepare for a future of work in independent settlements.

These years, 1909-1910, had also witnessed the development of Hashomer, the organization of guards whose exploits became almost legendary. It is beyond the scope of this article to describe the work of Hashomer; however, one of the outgrowths of Hashomer was an organization which contributed to the development of institutions of cooperation and mutual aid, and this creation has a place in this account.

In 1910 under the leadership of Hashomer, a country-wide cooperative known as HaAvoda (The Work) was organized. Its functions were to introduce new immigrants to a life of physical labor, to accustom them to work as watchmen, and to offer them comradely assistance. Actually there were never more than two or three branches of this organization active, and it was disbanded after only a year of existence. However, it had aroused much comment and discussion and had sown the seed for future development in the direction of mutual aid and a country-wide cooperative organization.

Thus we see that the years 1908-1911 were rich in experiences and in experiments and creations. What was lacking, however, was integration of the achievements and coordination of the experiments. During these years there had been at least three experiments in the Galilee toward the achievement of a general organization standing above party lines: Hachoresht, the ploughman; Hashomer, the watchman; Ha-avoda, the work. Even the group which had first settled the Kinneret farm was not composed of members of only one party. At the same time there were workers' clubs in the cities which were also non-partisan.

By 1911, however, all early efforts at general organization had disappeared. There was a danger that even the two collective villages, Merchavia and Daganah, would become individual utopian experiments lacking contact with each other and not integrated into the development of a workers' colonization.

THE STRUGGLE FOR UNITY OF ACTION AND MUTUAL AID

Before continuing the narration, let us evaluate the experiences and the achievements of the Chalutzim from the beginning of the Aliya until 1911. The first years had been years of trying physical adjustments to the climate and to work. With great difficulty the Chalutzim had overcome their

lack of skill and physical inadequacy. This was the first step in the direction of Kibbush Avoda. At an early date they had founded institutions of self-help and cooperation: the early communal kitchen, the hospitality committee, the worker's contracting committees. They had organized into two political parties, both seeking to achieve the same aim but through different means.

With the move to the Galilee and the accumulation of experience, new and lasting institutions were created. Training farms were established to aid the individual in his adjustment to Kibbush Avoda. On these training farms the workers formed cooperative groups. When the establishment of the Jewish National Fund made acquisition of land possible for all, these cooperative groups founded the first independent worker's settlements--kvutzot. Thus the J.N.F. became the instrument of land acquisition; the kvutza became the means for land reclamation and colonization. In the kvutza the ideal of Kibbush Avoda was bound to the task of colonization. The worker took the initiative for rebuilding the country, for creating his own opportunities to work and build rather than satisfying himself with "conquering" the right to work in existing jobs.

These developments are significant. However, up to this point the pioneers had failed in securing the coordination of the experiments or the integration of the achievements. There had been moments of unified action during the boycott at Petach Tikva; there had been at least three experiments in the direction of establishing a general organization standing above party lines: HaChoresh (the Plowman), HaShomer (the Guard), and HaAvoda (the Work); at the same time there were a few non-partisan workers' clubs in the cities.

By 1911 all early efforts at a general organization had disappeared. There was no body representing the worker which could discuss the lessons of the early years and which could plan for the future. The development was haphazard. The worker as an individual remained alone and uncared for; at best he found his way into a cooperative group which itself was also an individual unit detached from the community and from other cooperative groups. There was a danger that even the two permanently settled collective villages, Merchavia and Daganian, would become isolated utopian experiments lacking contact with each other and not integrated into the development of a workers' colonization.

This danger was recognized by many of the Chalutzim. In the month of Nissan (March) 1911, the newspaper of the Poale Zion party, HaAchdut (Unity), called for "The organization of the workers of the Galilee." At the same time the

following open letter was published in Merchavia by two members of Hapoel Hatzair and one member of the Poale Zion:

"For some time now the workers of the Galilee have felt the lack of a general organization...this is particularly important for us at this time, now that our work has begun to take on new forms and to become more complicated. Before our eyes we see that conditions are changing and that it is our duty to take a more considerable share in the work of rebuilding our country, and this work requires the efforts and the concentration of all our physical and spiritual resources.

"Hence we propose...to call a general conference of all the workers of the Galilee, so that this matter can be discussed and the best possible form for our organization chosen.

"We suggest that the conference take place on the first day of Passover...the major questions we shall discuss are: a) the organization of all the workers of the Galilee and the creation of a council of Galilean workers; b) the cooperative colony and our attitude to it..."

The conference took place in Degania on the first and second days of Pesach, 1911. 117 delegates and visitors from all the settlements of the Galilee participated.

A non-partisan council of seven was formed. It included members of Hapoel Hatzair and the Poale Zion, but in addition to these, a third group had representation--the element of the independent non-partisans who were to play an important and decisive role in the future development of the organized workers' movement in Eretz Yisrael. Berl Katznelson became a member of the council representing this group.

A second achievement of this conference was the founding of an organization of working women. Seventeen women met at this time to discuss their problems. They concluded that it was necessary to arrange for the training of women in agricultural work, and in that month, the five five women entered the farm at Kinneret.

This conference represented an important step in the question of unity and organization. It was the first of a series of meetings at which the problems of rebuilding the homeland were discussed and the difficulties were gradually ironed out. During the course of these conventions, the tools for the advancement of Kibbush Avoda and for the settlement

of the land which had been evolved in the early years of the Aliya were strengthened and expanded. At the same time new patterns for cooperation, planning and overall organizations were developed.

Immediately after the conference at Daganja in the spring of 1911, glowing accounts of the Galilean organization began spreading to Judea. Only a few months had passed before a meeting of Judean workers was called for Shavuot, 1911. At this meeting the Organization of Agricultural Workers of Judea was formed. D. Kalai in describing this conference says, "A general organization was created to serve as a propelling force for the practical development of the Jewish worker in Eretz Israel."

A path toward unity and organization was a difficult one. The three years which followed were filled with quarrels and debates. In all, there were three conferences in the Galilee and four in Judea from 1911 to 1914, at which time the outbreak of World War I halted normal activities in the country.

Rather than recount in detail the disputes of each of these conferences, let us attempt to view their overall problems and their overall achievements. The situation was much the same in both Judea and in the Galilee.

Throughout all of the conferences there were certain questions around which most of the discussion was centered. To begin with there was the question for the need of a general organization. Once the organization became established the discussion shifted to the details of its character: how much power should it have, whom should it include, what functions should it undertake. Berl Katznelson was the spokesman for a "broad program," stating that the workers' movement had the duty thrust upon it to become a moving force in the development of the country. It could not be turned into a mere trade union. He favored the adoption of a program of mutual aid, the creation of a sick fund, and the introduction of cultural and educational work in the program. He maintained that it was the mission of the workers movement to influence all the institutions that would be created in Eretz Israel.

Then too, there was much discussion concerning the question of settlement. The basic problem was: should the Chalutz seek to settle in an individualist colony, becoming either a worker or an independent farmer, or should he be encouraged to join an independent group.

Perhaps the bitterest arguments of all arose over the question of the use of funds from sources outside the country, particularly the money sent by the world Poale Zion in their

Fund for the Workers of Eretz Israel (Kupat Poale Eretz Israel of Kapai). Many of the workers opposed the use of their funds at all, fearing that the workers of Eretz Israel would come to be dependent on gratuities from the outside as had been the private colonists before then. Then too, there was the question of who should control the money if it were to be used, the Poale Zion party or the general workers' organization.

There were numerous other disputes, but there were also numerous valuable creations. At the very first conference in both Judea and in the Galilee employment exchanges were created to disseminate information concerning work opportunities and conditions. There was considerable discussion as to how much right these exchange groups had to assign workers to jobs, but in the end all agreed as to the value of the service.

Committees for culture was established, and a travelling library was founded. Great progress was made in the establishment of the Hebrew language and in Hebrew literature.

A "Committee for a Sick Fund" established at the first conference in Judea led to the establishment of a Kupat Cholim (Sick Fund), a system of health insurance covering the entire country and serving urban as well as rural workers.

Professional sections were formed within the organization, the first among them being that of workers in the orange plantations who were organized in a special council so that demands might be made on their employers for workers' insurance.

New colonies were founded in both Judea and in the Galilee with the encouragement and stimulation of the general organizations.

At the same time that these steps were being taken by the agricultural workers, certain developments came about in the cities which must be mentioned if we are to have a complete picture of the situation.

The workers in the cities were somewhat slower in beginning social activity than the workers of the colonies; however, they too upheld the principle of the Conquest of Labor and the conquest of themselves in labor. As early as 1908, Jewish workers had formed a commune of stone-cutters in Jerusalem. A few trade unions of small importance existed in Jaffa.

When the building of Tel Aviv was begun in 1911 the Jewish workers conducted a struggle to obtain work in construction. A great celebration was held after the completion of the first floor of a girls' school that was entirely built by Jewish labor. The last stones were sold as a sign of Thanksgiving.

In 1909 a workers' club had been founded in Jaffa by members of both parties. In 1910 clubs were started in both Jerusalem and Haifa but activities were very slow in developing.

Very early a few cooperatives developed among the workers of the cities. In 1911 a cooperative store was founded by the workers in Tel Aviv. Attempts were made to organize producers cooperatives in various fields. These attempts led to the successful establishment of a cooperative bakery in Jerusalem.

At the same time various groups were organized into unions: carpenters, locksmiths, porters, clerks and shop assistants, and teachers. All of these temporarily disappeared during the World War with the exception of the Union of Clerks, but they were important experiences from which the workers learned many practical lessons for future experience.

Early in 1914 the Union of Carpenters, founded a cooperative settlement for urban workers on the outskirts of Tel Aviv. Three or four dunams (about one acre) were allotted to each member so that he might support himself on some of his own produce as well as by outside work. The rules of the settlement provided that only workers might become members, that there was to be no speculation in the land of the settlement and its price was to remain permanently fixed, that when a member left the settlement he returned his land to the society as a whole which would lease it to a new member at the original price, which would be paid to the vacating individual, that the settlement was based upon the principle of Jewish labor. Unfortunately the outbreak of the war prevented the development of this experiment. A fashionable suburb of Tel Aviv, Ramat Gan, stands on the site today.

By 1914 the country seemed to be on the verge of great achievements. Immigration was increasing, and the newly developed institutions created by the Chalutzim were beginning to prove their worth. At the fourth conference of workers in Judea a number of conflicts were finally resolved and positive stands were taken on issues which had long been controversial. For the first time the concept of workers settlements was officially accepted and approved as a creation of great importance in the conquest of the country. Hence it was demanded that the J.N.F. devote most of its efforts to them.

Although it was decided to concentrate the efforts of the organization on the creation of this new Yishuv, the fight for Jewish labor in the older colonies was to continue without interruption.

The conference unanimously favored the creation of employment exchanges which had previously been opposed by many. A much more mature attitude was shown toward public funds and the objection to the use of the fund for the Workers of Eretz Israel (Kapai) disappeared.

Another powerful idea gained momentum at this conference: the idea of unity of all the organizations and institutions which had been developed by the Second Aliya. As early as the first conference in Judea it had been decided to cultivate a connection with the committee of the workers of the Galilee. The third conference in Judea called upon its central committee to realize the idea of founding a general committee, including representatives of the trade unions and professional organizations. The Sick Fund (Kupat Cholim) which was created at that time was designed to include all workers whether in cities or colonies. It remained for the fourth conference to elect a representative for the united committee of workers of the Galilee and Judea which included the urban workers. This committee met five weeks after the conference. Thus after many difficulties and disputes the first semblances of unity were achieved.

The outbreak of the World War brought a virtual bolt to most of the constructive activities within the country. With great difficulty the few who were not forced to leave the country preserved what had been created and succeeded in carrying on the work on a limited scale. However, the groundwork had been laid; the great subsequent development awaited only the end of the war and the resumption of immigration.

Let us briefly examine the cornerstones of the Yishuv of today so that we may see the connection with the achievements of the Second Aliya.

As the bedrock foundation of the Yishuv we must consider the chalutzic type of individual and the chalutz ideal. The word chalutz was first used in the Tanach (Bible) to refer to the advance guard which the children of Israel sent into Eretz Israel while they were still wandering in the desert. It was first used in our day to refer to the young workers of the Second Aliya.

The men and women of the Second Aliya became models for the Chalutzim who followed and who became bearers of the quest for Kibbush Avoda. Those early pioneers created a social environment and community outlook which encouraged in future immigrants the characteristics which we have come to associate with Chalutzit: love of labor, devotion to the ideals of a Jewish homeland and of a new social order, a determination to rebuild oneself and the land in spite of all obstacles.

A second cornerstone of the Yishuv today is the institution of the labor settlement: Kibbutz, Kvutza, and Moshav. A discussion of the social significance of these settlements and their lessons for the whole world in its quest for a brighter future would require an entire book. There is much material on this subject. Suffice it to say that the experiments of the second Aliya have led to the development of a new society based on democracy, equality, and justice.

Economically the labor settlement has been a cardinal factor in the development of the Yishuv. It became an instrument of national welfare rather than a mere tool for quick and easy private profit. It made possible settlement in dangerous and desolate areas, experimentation with crops and farming methods, direction of production to fill the needs of future expansion and immigration. Who could have imagined individual colonists settling in the swampy Emek in 1920? Who will suggest that individual colonists motivated by quick and easy profits will go to the desert of the Negev today!

The Kvutza was born during the days of the second Aliya as a practical answer to the need for fusion of the ideals of Kibbush Avoda and the redemption of the land which at the same time fulfilled the personal needs and social ideals of the Chalutz. It is a creation based on need and experience, which has continued to evolve with changing needs and new experiences.

A third creation of the era 1904-1914 is the Jewish National Fund. This institution has provided for the Chalutz the land on which to build the Kvutza. The J.N.F. was not a direct creation of the Chalutzim. However, their appearance as the "bearers of the dream" made the work of the J.N.F. possible. Their struggle for Kibbush Avoda secure the preservation of J.N.F. land for Jewish labor. Their influence guided and directed the use to which J.N.F. lands were put from the earliest years, and secured its use for mixed farming and cooperative settlement. Let anyone who questions the influence of the workers on the J.N.F. remember that the first forest planted by the Zionist Organization in Eretz Israel was planted by Arab labor. Let him remember that the early farms of the J.N.F. were supervised by hired overseers. The Fund has evolved to its present form as a result of the example and influence of the Chalutzim of the second Aliya and of those who followed their example.

Today the J.N.F. is of immeasurable importance. The idea of national land, available to all for use, owned by the nation in perpetuity is one of great social significance. The fact that purchase of this land is controlled

by the community for the general welfare is a matter of great strategic and political significance. How else could the illegal land edicts of the British government be fought and broken than by the J.N.F.? How else could land in remote and often barren places be brought under cultivation than with the help of the J.N.F.?

A study of the achievements of the J.N.F. is a project in itself, and a worthwhile one. In this survey we can only note that well over 50% of the Jewish owned land in Eretz Israel today is the property of the J.N.F. held in perpetuity in the name of the Jewish people. Whatever hope there is for the continued acquisition of land and continued colonization, is based on the functioning of the J.N.F. If today we have reclaimed the Emek and the Huleh swamps, and have begun the colonization of the arid Negev, it is through the J.N.F. that these projects were initiated.

Finally to the Chalutzim is due credit for the creation of the mighty Histadrut Ha-ovdim (Labor Federation). The actual founding of the Histadrut was deferred by the war until 1920 but the preparation for it belongs to the period of the second Aliya. The gap between the Committee of All Workers set up by the fourth conference of workers in Judea in 1914 and the founding of the Histadrut is not great.

Anyone familiar with the development of the Yishuv knows how deceiving this term "Federation of Labor" is. The Histadrut is more comparable to a government than to a trade union. In keeping with the direction imposed by its founders, the Histadrut undertook the task of overall responsibility for the rebuilding of the homeland. At the same time, it sought to provide security and good living for the Chalutzim who made up its ranks.

Thus we find the Histadrut organizing such cooperative ventures as a building contracting company (Solel Boneh), a housing company (Shikun), a water supply company (Mekorot), an airline (Aviron), a maritime corporation (Nachshon), a settlement company (Yakhin), a workers' bank (Bank HaPoalim). Aside from these business developments the Histadrut operates a school system, publishes Eretz Israel's largest daily paper (Davar), maintains one of the finest theater groups in the country (Ohel), owns a book publishing concern (Am Oved). It provides a sport organization (HaPoel), libraries and cultural centers throughout the land, an employment exchange, a system of socialized medicine (Kupat Cholim). All of these functions are performed in addition to the normal trade union activities, such as organization of unions, negotiation of collective bargaining contracts, etc. It might be well to add that

the Histadrut has been in the forefront of the struggle to raise the standard of living of the Arab masses and to gain their friendship. It publishes a weekly paper in Arabic (Haquqat Al Amir) and has organized unions among the small number of urban Arab workers.

As with the previous institutions named, it is impossible to evaluate the work of the Histadrut in a few words. Its achievements are a tribute to the vision of those early pioneers who first spoke of a "broad program" for the workers' movement and who began the work of modest cultural committees, of a sick fund, of labor exchanges, and cooperative enterprises. In this case again the structure of the Histadrut was developed not according to a pre-determined blueprint, but by experiment and experience. The Histadrut continues to expand today, to fit the needs of the continually expanding country. By now its membership approximates 275,000, who with their families form over one half of the inhabitants of the land.

In many respects we face the same situation today which confronted the Chalutzim of 1904. We have the choice, as they had it, between concentration on continued fruitless political agitation, high sounding talk, and irresponsible terrorism on one hand, and construction, immigration, self-defense, and settlement on the other. They turned from the vain discussion and charter seeking of the striped trousered diplomats to the work of building the land. It is thanks to their work that the Yishuv exists in Eretz Israel today. In some respects our situation is more difficult than was that of 1904. The forces arrayed against us are powerful; 6,000,000 of our brethren are murdered. In many respects, however, we are far stronger. We have behind us the experience of 40 years of successful constructive effort; in Eretz Israel there stands a vigorous community of 700,000 Jews with the capacity of absorbing hundreds of thousands of additional immigrants.